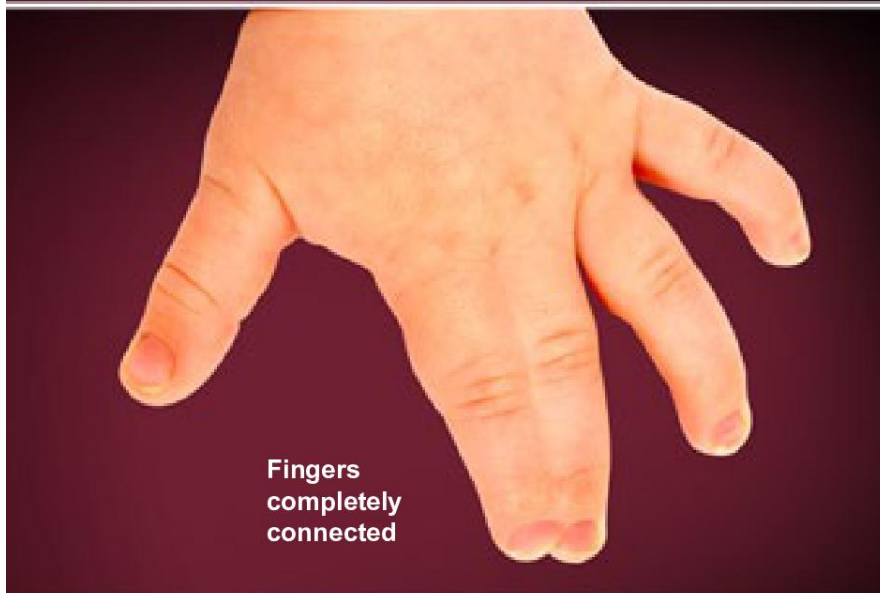




Syndactyly of the Hand



Overview

This condition is a common congenital anomaly of the hand. It occurs when two or more fingers are connected together by skin or tissue. The bones of the fingers may also be fused.

Causes

Syndactyly occurs during the development of the fetus. In most cases, the fingers fail to separate because of a genetic defect. In some cases, syndactyly has also been caused by abnormalities of the womb, and from exposure to toxins in the womb. A baby who has syndactyly may not have any other problems, but this condition can also occur along with other disorders.

Variations

Syndactyly is characterized by a joining together of one or more fingers. In minor cases, two or more fingers may be connected by only a slight amount of skin. This creates a webbing effect between the fingers. More severe cases may involve the fingers being completely connected by skin or tissue. The fingers may share a single artery or nerve. The bones may also fuse together. The connected fingers may appear as one large digit.

Treatment

Syndactyly is treated with surgery. If the syndactyly is minor, the surgeon will cut the webbing between the fingers, bandage the hand and place the arm in a cast while it heals. In more severe cases, the fingers will be separated, and a skin graft from another part of the body will be used to help cover the fingers. In some cases, surgery may not be recommended.